



Montana

## Department of Labor and Industry

### Commissioner's Office

Contact Casey Kyler-West, Communications Director  
TELEPHONE: (406)444-1520  
FAX: (406)444-1394  
E-mail: [ckylwest@mt.gov](mailto:ckylwest@mt.gov)

P.O. BOX 1728  
HELENA, MT  
59624-1728

DATE 2/25/09

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Governor Schweitzer Encourages Stillwater Workers to Apply for Assistance**

(**Helena**) Governor Brian Schweitzer is encouraging the workers laid off from Stillwater Mining Company to take advantage of the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) that was just approved. "Access to these kinds of benefits is crucial", says Governor Schweitzer. "We have new opportunities on the horizon with some of the energy projects coming to the state and this is a perfect opportunity for those workers laid off from Stillwater Mining to train for the jobs these energy projects will bring."

Stillwater Mining Company filed a petition on December 4<sup>th</sup> 2008 on behalf of its workers who were engaged in activities related to production of palladium, platinum, copper, nickel and other metals used in the automobile industry. The petition which was certified February 18<sup>th</sup> covers all workers of Stillwater Mining located in Billings, Nye, Columbus, and McLeod who became totally or partially separated from employment on or after December 4<sup>th</sup> 2007 (Impact Date), through two years from the date of certification (Expiration Date) are eligible to Apply for TAA.

Program benefits available to eligible trade impacted workers include:

- Job Search
- Relocation to employment
- Up to 104 weeks of training
- Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA), a weekly cash benefit payable to trade impacted workers, if they qualify, following the exhaustion of their state and Federal Unemployment Insurance Compensation (UI) Benefits
- Health Care Tax Credit (HCTC), Federal tax credits for the cost of health insurance
- Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance (ATAA), a wage subsidy payable to eligible trade impacted workers over the age 50 for whom training may not be an option

Each of the roughly 320 workers must apply individually for the benefits through their local Job Service Office, a division of the Montana Department of Labor and Industry. "We are encouraging these workers to apply as soon as possible so that they get the help they need to get back on their feet", says Labor Commissioner Keith Kelly.

The Trade Adjustment Act is a Federal program that provides assistance to adversely affected workers who lost their jobs or whose hours of work and wages are reduced as a result of increased imports or whose firms have been affected by, or are threatened to be affected by, shifts in production to certain foreign countries. It also provides assistance to workers whose firm is a supplier or downstream producer to a firm that received a certificate of eligibility.

####